viii) For upgrading infrastructure facilities at important textile centers,. a scheme" Textile Centre Infrastructure Development Scheme" (TCIDS) has been launched.

Bail out package for Textile Units

931. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has worked out a bailout package for potentially viable textile units, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the source of funding these units; and

(c) whether Government has identified location for setting up apparel parks, if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b) The Government has announced a package for restructuring of debt portfolios of potentially viable textile units having debt exposures of Rs. 2.00 crores and above. This package *inter-alia* provides that banks and financial institutions would be permitted to access external commercial borrowings (ECBs) and convert rupee term loans into foreign currency loans and the recipient units would pay interest at the rate of 8% to 9% on rupee loan basis.

(c) Since the inception of scheme, eleven Project Proposals have been sanctioned for setting up Apparel Parks at Tronica City & Kanpur (U.R), Surat (Gujarat), Thiruvanantapuram (Kerala), Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), Ludhiana (Punjab), Bangalore (Karnataka), Tirupur& Kanchipuram (Tamil Nadu), Special Economic Zone (SEZ) lndore(Madhya Pradesh) and Mahal (Jaipur, Rajasthan).

Decline in Export of Handloom products

†932. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a decline in the export of handloom industries products during the year 2002-03;

(b) if so, the target fixed for export for the current year;

(c) what has been the actual quantum of export in this regard and the amount earned thereby; and

(d) the reasons for not achieving the target or export?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRl GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) No, Sir. The exports of cotton handloom fabrics and made-ups have registered an increase of 27.52% in rupees terms and 25.66% in US dollar terms during the year 2002-03 as compared to the exports during the year 2001-02.

(b) A target of US$ 575 Million has been fixed for the current year 200304.

(c) During the year 2002-03, the quantum of exports of cotton handloom fabrics and made-ups had been of the order of 1371.41 lakh kg and the amount earned was Rs. 2633.27 Crore (US$ 544 Million). 38

(d) Does not arise.

Unhealthy working conditions

933. SHRl RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether women workers in textile and food processing industries are being discriminated with stagnant wage rates and unhealthy working conditions; and

(b)the measures proposed to import training to women to upgrade their skills to enable them adapt to changing modernisation technology to avoid gender discrimination?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRl GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) No, Sir. The Minimum Wages Act, 1948 provides for fixation of minimum wages for different categories of workers, and their periodical revision by the respective State Governments. The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 provides for equal remuneration for men and women workers. The Acts do not make any distinction on the basis of sex. The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 and the Rules framed thereunder provide for various welfare and health measures for such workers.

(b) The training programmes for textile workers meant for upgradation of skill are provided according to the specific area/sector where skill upgradation can lead to higher income making ability and the training programmes do not discriminate on gender basis.